

ing to compete for the annual prizes, which, in direct contravention of the rule mentioned above, he is allowed to do, and therefore can owe but little to the present director. Mr. Strudwick has not been a student in the school for twelve months, and is, moreover, a designer regularly employed in the glass trade; leaving only Messrs. Walker and Wallace, who can be placed in competition with ourselves, or who have not been beaten by us.

In their postscript No. 1, they give the number of students in April, in the evening classes, as 189; in July, the present month, 111; thus evincing a falling off of 78, certainly not to be accounted for by the withdrawal of the complaining students, in number 37, still leaving 41, nor even by that bit of fiction contained in their note, as I think the following extract from the report of 1843 and 1844 will prove; and since which time it is wished to be thought the school has increased in numbers.

In April, 1844, the number attending the evening classes was 196; in July, 1843 (I have not the return of July, 1844, otherwise I doubt not that month would be more favourable), the number attending was 187, leaving only a difference of nine, while this year the difference is forty-one beside ourselves. Can those students have shared in our sentiments? The excuse which they make use of does not apply to April, but to the three or four winter months in 1843. The evening attendance in November was 259; in December, 234; in January, 1844, 193; in February, 228.

I shall now proceed to remark on the second postscript. In the spring of 1843, six exhibitors were chosen from among the students: this was just at the time of the appointment of the present director, and they were of course students who had been taught by the previous director; now what right have those twelve students to place the names of those exhibitors in juxtaposition with ours, and what can they know (or what could be the weight if known) of the opinions of those who left the school twelve months ago? Or does it argue for the competence of the director, that those who ought to have been taught by him have been beaten by those taught by his predecessor? That it is not our fault, is, I think, fully shewn by the fact, that under the same teaching we have carried off every prize even from the exhibitors themselves (I allude to class drawings). But there is another strange fact; there are at present in the school two exhibitors; their names are not down amongst those signing the letter. How is this? they must know something of the state of the school.

As a proof of the spirit in which their letter was written, I will merely state, that a remark is made on a design executed by Mr. Phillip, one of the suspended students. After stating that the prize was one of three guineas, they go on to say that "Two guineas only were given because the council did not consider the design deserving of more." Previous to this, there is a design for paper mentioned, the prize for which was taken by Mr. Walker, one who has signed their paper; now the prize is mentioned as two guineas, and no remarks made; the truth is, the prize offered was three guineas, but the council said they gave him two guineas as a reward for his industry, but considered his design as not at all applicable to the purpose for which it was designed.

And now, Sir, a few words on the so-much-vaunted coming exhibition, and the means that have been had recourse to in order to produce it. The three assistant masters have been employed to execute specimens of ornamental painting instead of teaching the junior students. By far the larger portion of the other principal competitors have not the slightest right to be considered as students who have been taught in, and by the school, being in fact practical designers (some of many years standing) who have been procured to make a show, and whose productions will be attempted to be passed off as those of students taught by Mr. Wilson. This is precisely the case with six out of the twelve signing the letter, half of them not having been in the school more than four months (though there is a rule which says that no one shall compete until he has been a student three months), when they almost immediately commenced competing.

In conclusion, I think I have proved that almost without exception the senior students have complained, and been suspended; that

the only students the school could boast of having educated have been expelled; that eight out of the twelve signing the letter have no right to be considered as competitors with ourselves, or as the production of the school; that two others have no right to be allowed to compete at all; and that the present show, whatever it may be, has been produced by unworthy means, and I shall conclude by asking in the words of your correspondents,—whether a cause requiring the use of such disreputable means can be a good one?—I remain, Sir, &c. R. BURCHETT.

17, Bond-street, Commercial-road,
July 21, 1845.

The annual meeting was held on the 24th, when Lord Colborne presided. According to the report of the committee, the designs were more numerous, better executed, and displayed more knowledge of ornament, and greater range of taste and composition, than those exhibited on any similar occasion, holding out a cheering prospect of continued improvement on the part of the pupils. Unfortunately, however, for the present reputation of the school, it seems from verified documents sent to us, that several of those who were rewarded are practical designers, who have been in the school only a few months, while others are exhibitors appointed in Mr. Dyce's time. Mr. W. Williams when he brought the matter before the House of Commons dwelt strongly on this point, and asserted that it proved that the expelled students were the most able young men in the school. Mr. W. moved for a select committee to inquire into the allegations contained in the petition of the senior students of the School of Design in Somerset House, and into the general management and present state of that school.

Sir G. Clerk, on the part of the Government, would not listen to the proposition, spoke highly of the qualifications of Mr. Wilson as director, and referred with confidence to the works last rewarded. He said, the attack on Mr. Wilson had been prompted "by a bad heart (whose, we did not learn), and trusted the House would refuse the committee."

Mr. Ewart thought very differently. The school was disorderly—thirty-seven of the pupils had seceded—it was, in fact, in a state of disorganization (no, no). Manufacturers were complaining that they could not obtain good designs from the school, and Mr. Pugin, the architect, stated that the condition of the school was highly unsatisfactory, and that he was obliged to have recourse to continental workmen to execute his architectural decorations.* He put it to the House, then, whether they had not a right to ask for some inquiry (hear, hear). He found that the right honourable baronet opposite was inclined to put the school upon too mechanical a footing—to look upon the pupils rather as workmen than artists. Now, there lay the error which prevailed in the present system of management. Every eminent artist would tell them that the studies pursued at a School of Design should rest upon two main points—drawing from the human figure, and from nature. Upon these principles the most celebrated continental schools for design had been constructed (hear, hear). He agreed that the master should be an eminent artist. He also agreed with the opinion that this school should not be under the superintendence of a board. He should prefer to see some person out of that House at the head of it, who should still be responsible to the House for the manner in which the duties were performed. But the board now consisted of a number of persons, many of whom remained away from sheer idleness; and five or six converted the business into what (though it was considered a very unpleasant word in that House) he must then designate as a job. He was satisfied there ought, at all events, to be inquiry.

Mr. Wakley said, the report which had been made to the House was an attempt to deceive it. Mr. Herbert, the late master, was not even mentioned in it. He contended that Mr. Herbert was most unjustly treated—he was a man of great intellectual capabilities and great accomplishment in his art. It was acknowledged he was universally respected in the school. He was dismissed for some slight difference by a meeting of four councillors out

* The letter from which this is quoted will be found in our present number.

of twenty-four, one of whom said, "We must stop the reconciliation between Mr. Wilson and Mr. Herbert. It must not take place." Young men, such as these students, would not have ventured to have proclaimed the incompetency of Mr. Wilson if it were not palpable.

Mr. Hawes defended the council, and said that Mr. Herbert's feelings had been studied, and every endeavour made to retain his services, but finding no hope of re-establishing harmony, they were compelled to discontinue the services either of that gentleman or Mr. Wilson, and chose the former. Inquiry asked for on public grounds he should say by all means grant, but inquiry on the condition of being held up as jobbers he could not approve.

Mr. Wyse said the defect of the present school was, that the whole system as at first laid down was not acted upon.

Mr. Hume thought there had been some suppression of important facts in the report, and that further representations should be laid on the table. The motion was then negatived without a division.

While we earnestly desire to see the school efficiently conducted, we are most anxious not to commit injustice towards the present director. Impelled, however, by sense of duty, we cannot avoid asking a question, to which we trust a satisfactory answer will be afforded. A large sum of money, some say 1,000*l.*, has been expended in the production of a drawing-book; why is it that this work is withheld? and is it true that the 5,000 copies printed are consigned to the cellars of Somerset House?

NEW CHURCH AT GRAVESEND.

A church is now in course of completion at Milton-next-Gravesend, which calls for favourable notice. It is a cross church, without aisles, and the tower stands at the south-west angle. Unfortunately, it has not a favourable situation, being built on ground below the level of the neighbouring roads. A church is one of those buildings, which should always stand in a prominent position, meeting the eye from many miles distant, but this is so hid at the backs of houses, that its existence is not easily discovered. The erection of the spire will partly obviate the mistake: at present, only the tower is completed. It would not be right to cast any portion of blame upon the able architect, Mr. Wilson, of Bath, and the church is on the whole highly commendable. The omission of aisles, we are inclined to think an advantage in a modern church, but we do not think that the same number of people can be arranged with greater convenience in transepts, though these improve the external effect. The buttresses are set rather close, the roof is of good pitch, and the tracery of the windows well designed. The aisle is decorated. The church is built of rough stone with tooled dressings, and there is no want of ornament. The western door and window are set in a large arch. The pinnacles of the tower, which now appear too small, can hardly be judged of till the spire is completed. The interior of the church is very effective from the good design of the roof, which is framed without a tie-beam, and stained a dark colour. We are sorry to say, that there are galleries in the transepts, and at the west end, but they have been well managed. The pews have low doors, so that they do not differ much from open benches. The arrangement of the roof timbers, at the intersection of the nave and transepts, is admirable. The font is a very beautiful one—octagonal—on steps, with a kneeling stone. The pulpit is of stone. The reading-desk and all the minor accessories shew much thoughtful consideration.

THE CHELSEA EMBANKMENT.—The entire cost of the embankments about Cheyne-walk will be 75,425*l.* 4*s.* 11*d.*; of which Earl Cadogan contributes 6,745*l.* 0*s.* 10*d.*; Lord Calthorpe, 1,706*l.* 15*s.* 4*d.*; her Majesty, 1,303*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*; the Chelsea Water Company, 10,403*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.*; the Marquis of Westminster, 8,123*l.* 19*s.* 7*d.*; Mr. Sloane Stanley, 3,111*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.*; Miss Howe, 1,648*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*; and Colonel Talbot, 545*l.* 18*s.* 1*d.*. Some of these parties, however, have not yet given their consent to this allotment.—*Globe*.